AGRICULTURAL POLICY ANALYSIS AND PLANNING: A SUMMARY OF TWO RECENT ANALYSES OF A.I.D.-SUPPORTED PROJECTS WORLDWIDE

A.I.D. EVALUATION SPECIAL STUDY NO. 55
(Document Order No. PN-AAX-205)

by

John S. Tilney, Jr., Director
Agricultural Policy Analysis and Planning Project (Abt Associates Inc.)

James T. Riordan
Senior International Economist
(Abt Associates Inc.)

U.S. Agency for International Development

August 1988

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD

This report is one of a series of studies prepared by the Agricultural Policy Analysis and Planning (APAP) project, sponsored by the Office of Agriculture, Bureau for Science and Technology of the Agency for International Development (A.I.D.). The purpose of these studies is to gather and disseminate information about the experience A.I.D. has gained in the area of agricultural policy analysis and planning. Through interactions with policymakers, country analysts, and USAID Missions in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, the Near East, and Asia, APAP has identified and concentrated its technical resources on the following issues:

-- Developing agendas for an informed USAID Mission-host country dialogue on economic policies constraining progress in agriculture

-- Defining food-aid strategies and programs that foster and support economic policy reform measures

-- Identifying input and output price reform programs that stimulate agricultural production and productivity

-- Fostering private sector participation in input supply and product marketing and redefining the role of para-statal institutions

-- Developing the indigenous capacity of host country institutions to provide the information and apply the analytical methods needed to analyze, formulate, and implement policies conducive to agricultural development

This paper reviews and summarizes the preliminary findings of two studies of A.I.D.'s experience in supporting agricultural policy analysis and planning projects worldwide. One study is a comprehensive comparative analysis of A.I.D.'s agricultural policy analysis projects in Africa, Asia, and the Near East (APAP 1984). The other is an evaluation of similar policy analysis projects in Latin America (Abt Associates Inc. 1982). The analysis of the two studies indicates that while A.I.D. agricultural policy analysis and planning projects have had considerable success in building the capacity of host country

government institutions to analyze policy issues, they have had less success in fostering policy reform.

We hope this and other studies in the APAP series will provide useful information and analysis to all those involved in the continuing agricultural policy dialogue between A.I.D. and host country governments. We welcome comments, criticism, questions, and suggestions from our readers.

Philip Church
Economist
Office of Agriculture,
Bureau for Science and Technology,
Agency for International Development

SUMMARY

Over the past 20 years, the Agency for International Development (A.I.D.) has funded a broad range of agricultural policy analysis and planning projects worldwide. The Agency has supported many types of activities, including development of agricultural sector data bases, creation of planning units within government ministries and institutions, training of host country staff in policy analysis, and implementation of policy and programmatic changes.

This paper synthesizes the findings of two recent studies that reviewed A.I.D.-sponsored agricultural policy analysis and planning projects worldwide from 1970 to 1984. The first was the final report of a study (Abt Associates Inc. 1982) that examined the impacts and effectiveness of A.I.D.-sponsored agricultural planning projects in the Latin America and the Caribbean region. The second was an interim report (APAP 1984) of a study that is examining agricultural planning and policy analysis projects in Africa, Asia, and the Near East. The two studies used essentially the same methodology and therefore enable a comparative analysis of the effectiveness and impacts of A.I.D.-sponsored projects worldwide.

The major conclusion of the analysis is that, in a narrow sense, the agricultural policy analysis and planning projects sponsored by A.I.D. during the 1970s and early 1980s successfully achieved their primary purpose, which was to improve the analytical capacity of staff in host country government institutions. The projects were less successful, however, in influencing policy and programmatic change. Policy issues were often given insufficient emphasis in project design and were consequently downplayed during project implementation.

If A.I.D.'s support is to contribute more directly to policy reform and programmatic change, A.I.D.'s approach to and design of policy analysis and planning projects need to be modified. First, better diagnosis is needed of the major

problems of the agricultural sector in developing countries and of the policies constraining development. The diagnosis must precede or accompany project design so that projects can be more specifically focused on the policy issues that need to and can be addressed. Second, far greater attention should be given to the needs of host country decision-makers. Without their support and active participation, experience suggests that there is little reason to initiate a project. Finally, the strategy for targeting agricultural policy analysis and planning assistance to host country governments needs to be reexamined. Assistance should be targeted to the government units that decision-makers rely on for policy analysis, whether these units are located inside or outside the ministry of agriculture.

More specific recommendations for the design of future A.I.D.-sponsored agricultural policy analysis and planning projects are presented in the last section of this report. It is encouraging to note that some of these recommendations, which are based on the experience of A.I.D. projects implemented in the 1970s and early 1980s, have been incorporated into a new group of projects. These projects were designed in the mid- 1980s and are currently being implemented in countries such as Ecuador, Niger, and the Philippines. It will be interesting to observe what these new projects accomplish in the years to come.

1. SCOPE OF THE TWO STUDIES

Although the Agency for International Development (A.I.D.) has conducted numerous evaluations of individual projects, relatively little attention has been paid to assessing the overall impact of agricultural policy analysis and planning assistance. The two studies summarized here, one covering Africa, Asia, and the Near East (APAP 1984) and the other, Latin America and the Caribbean (Abt Associates Inc. 1982), are an exception. Taken together, they enable a worldwide comparison of the results of A.I.D.-sponsored agricultural planning and policy analysis projects. The studies focus on the impacts of A.I.D.-sponsored projects and the reasons why certain projects have achieved greater impacts than others.

1.1 Study Sample

The two studies attempted to review all agricultural policy analysis and planning projects funded by A.I.D. since 1970, as well as other types of A.I.D.-sponsored projects that had a major agricultural policy analysis or planning component. (A list of all of the projects included in the two studies and the types of project documents examined for each project is shown in the Appendix.) From available documentation, the Latin America and Caribbean study identified 63 policy analysis and planning activities; the Africa, Asia, and Near East study identified 66 projects.1 The reason for the relatively large number of activities in the Latin America and Caribbean region is that the

study included 23 small planning or policy analysis activities that were not formal projects, whereas this type of activity was excluded from the Africa, Asia, and Near East study because of the difficulty of obtaining good documentation.

The 129 projects and activities identified in the two studies represent assistance to 47 countries worldwide. In Africa, 18 countries received assistance compared with 9 in Asia, 5 in the Near East, and 16 in Latin America and the Caribbean. Ten of the projects are regional in scope -- 3 in Africa and 7 in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Although most of the policy analysis and planning projects sponsored by A.I.D. were identified (129 projects), only about half of the projects (61) had been evaluated. Because the two studies relied on previously conducted evaluations for the analysis of project impacts, only the 61 evaluated projects were included in the impact analysis. Although it is possible that the unevaluated projects might have had different types of impact from those found in the evaluated projects, the sample size was sufficiently large to permit the extension of the major findings to the universe of policy analysis and planning projects.

==========

1 The interim report identified 66 projects. It is anticipated that the final report will have a somewhat modified list of projects.

1.2 Identification and Categorization of Impacts

Both studies used existing A.I.D. project evaluations to identify impacts; the Latin America study team also conducted a series of site visits and case studies to supplement the information available from evaluations. (Site visits had not yet been conducted for the Africa, Asia, and Near East projects at the time this report was prepared.)

The studies identify four different kinds of impact for agricultural policy analysis and planning activities: (1) capacity-building impacts, which increase the capacity of institutions to conduct policy analysis and planning and to effectively provide input to policymaking; (2) interinstitutional impacts, which are the impacts of policy analysis and planning institutions on other public or private sector institutions; (3) impacts on decision-makers, which affect decision-makers' awareness of our demand for policy analysis and planning; and (4) policy and program impacts, which are impacts on policy and programmatic decisions.2 These two studies assessed the effectiveness of agricultural policy analysis and planning activities in terms of these four types of impacts.

1.3 Funding of Agricultural Policy Analysis and Planning Projects

Since 1970, about $464.6 million has been allocated from all sources to the agricultural policy analysis and planning activities included in the sample (see Table 1). This sum excludes project funding not directly related to agricultural planning and policy analysis, for example, for commodity inputs or sector loans. However, because of the broad definition of policy analysis and planning projects applied in the studies,

Table 1. Funding of Agricultural Policy Analysis and Planning Activities, 1970-1984
(in thousands of dollars)

Region	Period Covered	Number of Projects and Activities	Funding A.I.D. Grant	A.I.D. Loan	Host Country	Other	Total
Africa{a}	1970-1984	40	121,193	5,400	41,493	15,275	183,361
Asia{a}	1970-1984	16	32,850	16,000	65,189	5,684	119,723
Near East{a}	1970-1984	5	52,837	0	11,429	3,606	67,872
Latin America and the Caribbean{b}	1970-1982{c}	63	29,986	19,528	38,106	6,011	93,631
Total		124	236,866	40,928	156,217	30,576	464,587

==========

{a} Funding information was available for only 61 of the 66 projects identified in Africa, Asia, and the Near East.

{b} Twenty-three small policy analysis and planning activities that were not formal projects are included in the total number of projects for this region.

{c} Because funding data for Latin America cover only the period 1970-1982, whereas data for the other regions cover the period 1970-1984, to the funding for Latin America and Caribbean region is underreported.

==========

the total includes funding for such activities as data collection, survey implementation, and training, which are part of the policy analysis and planning process. A.I.D.'s contribution, most of which has been in the form of grants, amounted to $277.8 million, or approximately 60 percent of total funding. The amount allocated to policy analysis and planning has been greatest in Africa ($183.4 million), followed by Asia ($119.8 million), Latin America and the Caribbean ($93.6 million), and the Near East ($67.9 million). As these figures indicate,

A.I.D., host countries, and other donors have made a substantial investment in agricultural analysis policy and planning since 1970.

==========

2 In the Africa, Asia, and Near East study, the socioeconomic impacts of policy analysis and planning projects were also examined. This type of impact was not considered in the Latin America and the Caribbean study, however, and so it has not been included here for the sake of consistency.

2. PROJECT GOALS, PURPOSES, AND IMPACTS

2.1 Project Goals and Purposes

The studies examined the goals and purposes of the A.I.D. sponsored policy analysis and planning projects as presented in the projects' logical framework. Project goals tended to be general, calling for overall improvement in agricultural sector performance and improvement in the life of rural people. Goals were highly consistent across projects.

Project purposes were more concrete and defined the substance of projects in more detail. Several generalizations concerning project purposes are applicable to the entire set of policy analysis and planning projects. First, most projects had capacity building as an objective. Second, most projects included training of host country personnel as a major purpose. Third, few projects were designed specifically to analyze and bring about changes in defined areas of agricultural policy; policy analysis and policy reforms were rarely identified as key project purposes.

2.2 Project Impacts

A.I.D.-sponsored agricultural policy analysis and planning projects have had a substantial impact on the capacity of host country governments to engage in policy analysis and planning. In fact, capacity-building impacts were by far the most prevalent of all impacts, occurring in 58 of the 61 projects examined for project impact (see Table 2). Given that capacity building was an objective of most projects, it is not surprising that capacity building was the major impact of agricultural planning and policy analysis projects.

Table 2. Distribution of Project Impacts by Type of Impact and Region, 1970-1984

	Africa		Asia		Near East		Latin America and Caribbean		Total	
Impact	Number (n = 24)	%	Number (n = 12)	%	Number (n = 3)	%	Number (n = 22)	%	Number (n = 61)	%

Capacity Building	21	88	12	100	3	100	22	100	58	95
Interinsti-tutional	10	42	7	58	2	58	2	67	39	64
Decision-Maker	9	38	6	50	0	0	9	41	24	39
Policy and Program	6	25	5	42	0	0	9	41	20	33

Capacity-building impacts usually resulted from the formation of a new policy analysis or planning unit, the addition of new qualified staff to existing units, or the upgrading of staff in existing units through long-term training. In Liberia, for instance, the Agricultural Program Development project resulted in the formation of a Statistical Division and a Planning Bureau in the Ministry of Agriculture. In Thailand, the Agricultural Sector Analysis project succeeded in establishing a unit that, for the first time in Thailand, applied economic analysis to policy problems in the agricultural sector.

The incidence of capacity-building impacts varied little by region.

Interinstitutional impacts were observed in 64 percent of the projects reviewed (39 of 61 projects). Interinstitutional impacts involved improvements in coordination between agricultural policy analysts and planners and their counterparts in other public sector agencies or private sector organizations. The major type of interinstitutional impact has been the establishment of interagency boards or commissions, whose role is to improve institutional coordination. In Indonesia, for example, the Assistance to Agriculture project was responsible for the formation of an interdepartmental fertilizer management board. In Honduras, an Agricultural Policy Commission, established through an A.I.D. project, was able to promote common methodologies for policy analysis across institutions involved in the agricultural sector.

Improved communications between units in government was also a frequently noted interinstitutional impact. Tunisian staff working on the Agricultural Economic Research and Planning project were responsible for the first effective collaboration between the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Agriculture on medium-term investment planning.

Interinstitutional impacts were most frequent in projects in Latin America and the Caribbean (91 percent), followed by the Near East (67 percent), Asia (58 percent), and Africa (42 percent).

Impacts on decision-makers were observed in 24 of the 61 projects (39 percent). Although such impacts have been varied,

the most prevalent impact was an increase in demand for information and analysis by decision-makers. Another relatively common impact was the development of greater understanding by decision-makers of the agricultural sector and its relationships with other sectors of the economy. In Kenya, the Rural Planning project provided extensive information to key officials about the needs of small farmers, which led eventually to the directing of more assistance to this group in the country's development plan. Similarly, in Bangladesh the staff working on the Rural Finance Experimental project provided key officials with information and insight about the agricultural credit system and possibilities for revising their programs.

Projects in Asia achieved this type of impact more frequently than did projects in Latin America and the Caribbean and Africa; no impacts of this type were observed in Near East projects.

Policy and program impacts, which result when a project contributes to changes in policies or programs, were observed in 20 of the 61 projects (33 percent). Some examples of this type of impact include changes in policies or programs affecting commodity pricing, credit, marketing, land redistribution, commodity distribution, and investment. In Indonesia, for example, a flexible fertilizer pricing system and an expanded rice storage program were established because of work on the Assistance to Agricultural Planning project. In Ghana, the staff working on the National Agricultural Planning project developed proposals for a National Fertilizer and Seed Program, which were accepted and funded by the Government.

The regional distribution of policy and program impacts is similar to that of interinstitutional and decision-maker impacts. Policy and program impacts were observed in approximately 40 percent of the projects examined in Asia and Latin America, 25 percent of the projects in Africa, and in none of the projects in the Near East. It should be stressed, however, that this simple calculation does not account for any qualitative differences among the policy/program impacts identified. As might be expected, some impacts were more dramatic than others.

2.3 Conclusions

The major conclusion of the impact analysis of the 61 projects is that the projects were successful in the narrow sense of achieving their purposes, which dealt primarily with capacity building and training. Policy reform and programmatic change were not major purposes of the projects examined, so it is not surprising that these types of impacts were not as common as capacity-building impacts. The projects also had some impact on decision-makers, increasing their awareness of the importance of policy analysis and planning, but these impacts were considerably less frequent than capacity-building and interinstitutional impacts.

Another major conclusion of the impact analysis relates to regional differences in the prevalence of impacts. Projects in Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean have had greater policy/program and decision-maker impacts than have projects in Africa and the Near East. In the case of the Near East projects, the explanation is quite straightforward. The three Near East projects in our sample were not designed to result in decision-maker or policy impacts; their focus was exclusively on data gathering and analysis. The relatively low level of policy impact in Africa compared with Asia and Latin America has three major explanations:

-- Asian and Latin American countries have emphasized agriculture more than have African countries and so have tended to provide more support to such projects.

-- Given Africa's limited manpower and institutional resources, A.I.D.-sponsored projects in Africa have been more involved in basic institution and capacity building and less involved in policy analysis and implementation issues than have projects in Asia and Latin America.

-- The logistics of carrying out projects have been more difficult in Africa than in other regions.

3. LESSONS LEARNED

To improve A.I.D.'s program and policy design for agricultural policy analysis and planning projects, an understanding of the types of impacts and their incidence is insufficient. More important is an awareness of the factors that have contributed to the relative effectiveness of these projects. The various activities funded by A.I.D. under these projects have had somewhat different objectives and thus different reasons for their relative effectiveness. This section examines the three major activities undertaken as part of these projects -- policy analysis and planning, institution building, and data collection and analysis -- in terms of the factors that influenced their effectiveness.

3.1 Policy Analysis and Planning Activities

Policy analysis and planning activities have ranged from multiyear sectoral assessments and modeling efforts to 3-week studies undertaken by short-term advisers. Although it is difficult to compare activities that are so different in scale, a number of general lessons can be drawn from A.I.D.'s experience with these projects.

1. Effective contact must be established between analysts and decision-makers. There has been a general and pervasive lack of such contact in most projects. There appears to have been little real indigenously generated demand for policy analysis and planning among decision-makers in host country government

institutions -- that is, a demand arising from policy concerns and formulated in specific terms. Analytical units often have no clear mandate and, as a consequence, operate in a policy vacuum. A major effort during the design and implementation of projects must be to identify and address issues of concern to decision-makers.

2. Agricultural policy analysis and planning should generally concentrate on fast turnaround, highly focused, problem-oriented studies. Long-term, data-intensive activities or wont to run into technical difficulties, to become disengaged from pressing policy issues, and to cost far more than initially estimated. In general, policy analysis activities should be designed as relatively short-term efforts of no more than 1 year in duration. While there is also a role for long-term development efforts, such projects need to produce findings on a periodic basis and to engage in short-term analytical efforts as well.

3. Flexibility is critical to effectiveness. A number of relatively open-ended projects have been designed to address key problems as they arise. Such projects have resulted in policy and programmatic change more often than have tightly defined, highly structured projects. Flexibility can be built into a project by setting aside money for special activities and by providing mechanisms for project staff to identify and work on open-ended activities.

4. Members of the technical advisory team should have an open-minded approach and work in close collaboration with counterpart staff. An advisory team that takes a dogmatic approach and tries to force preconceived ideas on counterpart staff will quickly isolate itself. The most effective teams have assumed a low-key, hard-working posture and have demon- strated that they are working for the host country government staff -- not vice-versa. Selecting this type of technical advisory staff may be the single most important element of the project design and implementation process.

5. Technical advisory personnel should not be expected to handle the administrative demands of a project without special assistance. In the case of a project with expatriate advisers, it is generally unrealistic to expect a chief of party both to exert technical leadership and to serve as project manager without a capable on-site administrative assistant.

6. Analytical methods need to be kept simple. In technology transfer activities, the absorptive capacity of host-country technical personnel must be kept clearly in mind. If a project introduces techniques that are too sophisticated, they may never be used after A.I.D. support ends. As a rule, therefore, the analytical methods introduced by a project should be appropriate to their context and simple enough to ensure their institutionalization.

3.2 Institution-Building Activities

Institution building or capacity building has been a prevalent activity in all the projects examined. Such activities have included support for the creation of new analytical units, training of host country staff, and the provision of technical advisers for long- and short-term assistance to support host country institutions. The following lessons concerning instituiton building emerged from the evaluation.

1. Targeting of assistance is a critical determinant of project impact on decision-makers or policy and programs. Too often, project assistance has been directed to isolated units involved primarily in a data collection and statistical analysis. Effective projects have targeted assistance to those in the ministry of agriculture or other agencies who can bring about change. The actual institutional location of the projects tends to be less important than the organizational influence of the unit manager, the analytical capability of the unit staff, and the level of interaction with decision-makers.

2. The policy agenda should be set jointly by decision-makers and analysts. As mentioned in Section 3.1, there has been a pervasive lack of contact between decision-makers and analysts. Workshops, seminars, or working meetings involving the minister or secretary of agriculture are necessary to bridge the gap between analysts and decision-makers. The most effective way to involve the decision-makers, however, appears to be to produce a study whose findings they can use in restructuring policies and programs.

3. Effective planning and policy analysis require strong leadership and continuity of technically capable personnel. Most developing country governments have problems attracting and retaining qualified people. The payscale and opportunities for advancement are usually poor. Thus, incentives that help to attract and retain qualified staff need to be built into projects, such as improvements to office space and equipment, the provision of housing and vehicles, and short-term training courses and seminars. Long-term overseas training has also been demonstrated to be an effective incentive for attracting qualified candidates. A small number of well-trained, dynamic host country staff is usually sufficient to establish an effective policy analysis unit. Thus, A.I.D.-sponsored projects that can help to attract and retain such staff will have a greater impact on the institution-building capacities of host countries.

4. The level of host country support will often determine the outcome of a project. Projects were far more likely to be completed successfully and to have the desired impacts when the host country government provided the type of support (e.g., finances, staff, and facilities) anticipated by project designers. This finding has several implications for the design and implementation of projects. Project designers need to be more realistic about what support the host country will be able to provide on a project. If a country is unwilling or unable to provide the agreed-on support during the project, A.I.D. should

consider either a major restructuring or termination of the project because the project is unlikely to achieve its purposes without appropriate host country support.

3.3 Data-Collection and Analysis Activities

Data-intensive activities were the third major component of many projects. These activities included agricultural censuses, household and consumer surveys, production surveys, and the construction and use of other agricultural data bases. The main lessons learned concerning these activities are listed below.

1. Data-related activities can support analytical work but they should not be expected to set the direction for that work. Data activities should grow from, and be directly tied to, the requirements of a specific analysis or series of analyses. In many instances, the collection and maintenance of data has grown into a far larger and more expensive undertaking than anticipated and have been isolated from the analytic functions they should have been supporting.

2. Agricultural policy and planning units should generally not have direct responsibility for data-related activities. Although agricultural sector analysts should have a role in determining what data should be collected, on balance it is probably preferable to separate the statistical and analytical functions of planning and policy analysis in distinct institutional units.

3. The inadequacy of existing data is not in itself a sufficient rationale for launching a major new data collection initiative. Analysts the world over are wont to complain that data at their disposal are flawed and therefore unusable. No data are ever perfect and, as a rule, much more can be done with existing data than is usually attempted.

4. Consistency checks should be built into all data collection and processing efforts. Given the magnitude of some of the data sets developed, errors are very likely to occur. If errors are not corrected before the data are presented in statistical reports, the credibility of the entire statistical activity will suffer. Thus explicit attention needs to be paid to data review and evaluation. Whenever possible, data should be carefully assessed through consistency tests, error analysis, sensitivity analysis, tracking tests, or, at a minimum, review by knowledgeable professionals. Survey data should be checked against secondary sources of data as a rough gauge of accuracy and reliability.

5. Careful planning is required before the introduction of computer-intensive activities. Many projects that made intensive use of computers evidenced a lack of appropriate planning for their use. In computer-intensive activities, substantial planning is generally required to guarantee an appropriate mix of hardware, software, and in-country support services at reasonable

cost.

4. AN APPROACH TO FUTURE PROJECT DESIGN

For the most part, the projects reviewed in these two studies did not have policy or program change as a stated objective. Consequently, it is not surprising that the projects have had relatively little impact on policies and programs. They have, however, made solid contributions to the building of host country capacity for policy analysis and planning. Unfortunately, it is not at all clear that the creation of such capacity leads to constructive policy and program changes. This may occur in the long run, but experience indicates that such an outcome is far from automatic in the short run.

If A.I.D.'s support is to contribute more directly to policy reform and programmatic change, A.I.D.'s approach to and design of policy analysis and planning projects need to be modified in several ways. First, better diagnosis is needed of the major problems of the agricultural sector and of the policies constraining sector development. The diagnosis must precede or accompany project design so that projects can be more specifically focused on the policy issues that need to and can be addressed.

Second, far greater attention should be directed toward the needs of key decision-makers. Decision-makers will have their own ideas about what constrains the growth and productivity of the agricultural sector, and they will usually have more insight than expatriate advisers or USAID Mission staff about what policy areas are politically possible to address. The Latin America and Caribbean study recommended that a baseline study be conducted to inform project designers of the views and needs of host country decision-makers.

Third, an assessment should be made of the capacity of the host country government to engage in policy analysis and planning. This review should identify the units or analysts on which decision-makers rely for information, as well as the level of training and the size of staff in the planning or analytical units. This information should be used by project planners to direct assistance to the units or analysts that can effect change.

The following are some of the issues that should be explored in this three-prong diagnostic approach to project planning and design.

Issues Affecting the Agricultural Sector

-- What has been the performance of the agricultural sector over the past 1-5 years?

-- How has this performance compared with the performance in other countries of similar size and physical conditions?

-- Have there been major differences in performance among segments of the agricultural sector? What accounts for these differences?

Issues Affecting Agricultural Policies and Policymakers

-- What are the major policies affecting the growth and productivity of the agricultural sector?

-- Why were these policies instituted?

-- Which policies have the potential for change over the next 5 years?

-- Who are the major actors in the policy arena?

-- On what kinds of activities do ministry of agriculture and other decision-makers spend most of their time?

-- What other public sector institutions influence agricultural policy?

-- What are the key interest groups in the agricultural sector?

-- What is the nature of the relationships that exist among the ministry of agriculture, the national planning office, and the ministry of finance?

-- What institutional mechanisms come into play in decisions on what to fund and what not to fund?

Issues Affecting the Agricultural Sector Planning or Analytical Unit

-- Which analytical units do decision-makers rely on for policy analysis?

-- In what specific activities is the agricultural sector planning or policy analysis unit involved?

-- What are the relative priorities of these different activities?

-- Who defines the work of the agricultural sector planning or analysis unit?

-- How many people work in the unit?

-- What are their qualifications?

-- What is the role of the analytical unit in the preparation of plans and the development of projects?

-- How extensive are the contacts of the analytical unit with other institutions in both the public and private sectors?

The answers to these questions can provide a basis for making informed judgments on the kinds of activities that can be expected to have the greatest impact in upcoming projects. This three-prong diagnosis may be incorporated into the Country Development Strategy Statement as well as provide background material for a Project Paper. The underlying premise for designing future agricultural sector planning and policy analysis activities must simply be to view things as they are, not as one might like them to be.

It should be stressed that this diagnosis is usually an involved and complicated process and may require adjustments to the project design process. In many cases, project designers have definite preconceptions about what the major elements of the project should be. The design process, therefore, is often marked by a search for evidence that will buttress the validity of preconceptions rather than by a search to identify the key elements that currently drive the planning and decision-making enterprise. This tendency is really a matter of degree, of course, but it is there. Meetings between a minister of agriculture and a project design team, for example, are often a forum in which the minister reacts to the team's ideas, rather than vice-versa. And when a team does make a conscious attempt to use these meetings to learn about the needs of the ministry and the realities of existing policy analysis and planning capabilities, it often feels frustrated by the responses it receives. At one extreme, the project design team may be able to elicit no more than generalities ("Our objectives are to increase production, increase incomes, and improve the distribution of income"). At the other extreme, the team may be met by a recitation of trivial details ("We're having trouble getting everyone to sign off on the release of the rice project equip- ment from customs").

The moral of the story, therefore, is that a diagnosis of concerns and problems generally cannot be put together from a series of brief meetings between the design team and the minister. The diagnosis takes time and often requires piecing together a variety of details before the whole picture emerges. Frequent contacts with agricultural sector planning and analytical units can be key to this process, but the philosophy guiding these contacts should be different from what it has often been in the past. Project designers should view these contacts as a mechanism for identifying what decision-makers would like planners and analysts to do, rather than for identifying what planners and analysts themselves would like to do.

Although this diagnostic approach should be incorporated in the design of all policy analysis and planning projects, every element of this approach cannot always be incorporated into the project design process. Some elements will also have to be undertaken as part of project implementation and as background work for the Country Development Strategy Statements. However this is done, this information needs to be considered in order for projects to be effectively designed and implemented in the future.

APPENDIX

AGRICULTURAL POLICY ANALYSIS AND PLANNING PROJECTS INCLUDED IN THE TWO STUDIES AND PROJECT DOCUMENTATION EXAMINED

Table A-1. Agricultural Policy Analysis and Planning Projects in Africa

Project	Project Paper	Mid-term, Interim, or Special Evaluation	Final Evaluation
Botswana			
1. Agricultural Planning (633-0067)	X	X	
Cameroon			
2. Agricultural Mgmt & Planning(631-0008)	X	X	
Ethiopia			
3. Agricultural Advisory Services (663-0111)	X	X	
4. Agricultural Sector Planning (663-0172)	X	X	
5. Drought Recovery & Rehab. (663-0187)	X	X	
Gambia			
6. Mixed Farming & Resource Mgmt(635-0203)	X	X	
Ghana			
7. National Agricultural Planning (641-0048)	X	X	
8. District Planning and Rural Development (641-0073)	X		X
Kenya			
9. Agricultural Planning (615-0133)	X	X	
10. Rural Planning (615-0162)	X	X	X
11. Rural Planning II (615-0189)	X	X	

12. Arid & Semi-Arid Land Development (615-1072)	X	X	
Lesotho			
13. Agricultural Sector Analysis (632-0064)	X	X	
14. Agricultural Planning (632-0218)	X	X	
Liberia			
15. Agricultural Program Development (669-0123)	X	X	X
16. Agricultural Cooperative Development (669-0127)	X	X	
17. Agricultural Sector Analysis & Planning (669-0137)	X	X	
18. YMCA Agricultural Training & Development (669-0141)	X		
Mali			
19. Livestock Sector I (668-0203)	X	X	
Mauritania			
20. Renewable Resources Management (682-0205)	X	X	
21. Rural Assessment and Manpower Survey (682-0211)	X	X	
Niger			
22. Evaluation Assistance to Ministry of Planning (683-0229)	X		
23. Forestry and Land Use Planning (683-0230)	X		
24. Integrated Livestock Production (683-0242)	X		
25. Agricultural Production Support (683-0234)	X		
26. Cereals Research (683-0225)	X		
Rwanda			
27. Agricultural Survey and Analysis (696-0115)			
Senegal			
28. Casamance Regional Development (685-0205)	X	X	
29. Agricultural Research & Planning(685-0223)	X	X	
Sudan			
30. Agricultural Planning & Statistics (650-0047)	X	X	
31. Rural Development Planning (650-0012)	X	X	
32. Southern Region Agricultural Development I (650-0046)	X	X	
Tanzania			

33. Livestock Marketing Development (621-0122) X X X

Upper Volta (Burkina Faso)

34. Grain Marketing Development (686-0243) X
35. Eastern Region Food Production (686-0244) X

Zaire

36. Agricultural Economic Development (660-0050) X X X
37. Agricultural Sector Studies (686-0070) X

Zambia

38. Agricultural Training, Planning and Institutional Development (611-0075) X X

Regional Projects

39. Gambia River Basin Development (625-0012) X
40. Niger River Development Planning(625-0915) X
41. Entente Food Production (626-0203) X X

Table A-2. Agricultural Policy Analysis and Planning Projects in Asia

Project	Project Paper	Mid-term, Interim, or Special Evaluation	Final Evaluation
Bangladesh			
42. Agricultural Sector Assessment			
43. Rural Finance Experimental Project (388-0025)	X		X
Indonesia			
44. Assistance to Agricultural Planning (497-0625)	X	X	
45. Agricultural Development Planning and Administration (497-0625)	X		
Korea			
46. Rural Policy Planning and Development (489-0594)	X		X
Laos			
47. Agricultural Development -- Administration and Planning (439-0065)	X	X	

Nepal

48. Strengthening Institutional Capacity (367-0144)	X		
49. Administration and Management (367-0101)	X		
50. Resource Conservation and Utilization (367-0132)	X	X	

Pakistan

51. Agricultural Research (391-0296)	X	X	
52. Agricultural Inputs (391-0419)	X	X	

Philippines

53. Small Farmers Income and Production (492-0259)	X	X	
54. Integrated Agricultural Production and Marketing (492-0302)	X	X	X
55. Agricultural Research (492-0280)	X	X	
56. Agricultural Research II (492-0286)	X	X	

Sri Lanka

57. Agricultural Sector Assessment			
58. Development Services & Training(383-0044)	X	X	

Thailand

59. Agricultural Planning (493-0317)	X		
60. Rural Off-Farm Employment Assessment (493-0306)	X		
61. Agricultural Sector Analysis (493-1084)	X	X	X

Table A-3. Agricultural Policy Analysis and Planning Projects in Latin America and the Caribbean

Project	Project Paper	Mid-term, Interim, or Special Evaluation	Final Evaluation
Bolivia			
62. Basic Foods Production and Marketing (511-0451)	X	X	
63. Agricultural Sector Loan (511-0455)	X	X	X
64. Agricultural Sector II (511-0465)	X	X	
65. Rural Development Planning (511-0471)	X	X	
66. Farm Policy Study (511-0485)	X		
67. Departmental Development Corporations	X		

(511-0511)
68. Agricultural Sector Assessment
69. Southern Valleys Assessment

Chile

70. Agricultural Production Credit (513-0294) X X
71. Agricultural Sector Assessment

Columbia

72. Colombian Agricultural Sector Analysis X

Costa Rica

73. National Development Information System X
(515-0139)
74. Agricultural Sector Assessment

Dominican Republic

75. Agricultural Sector Loan II (517-0116) X
76. Agricultural Sector Analysis Phase II X X
(517-0117)
77. National Employment Policy (517-0121) X X
78. Agricultural Sector Analysis (598-0554) X X X
79. Comprehensive Resource Inventory and X X X
Evaluation System (931-0236)
80. Agricultural Sector Assessment

Ecuador

81. Research, Education and Extension Baseline Study

El Salvador

82. Development Planning (519-0166) X
83. Multi-Purpose Household Survey (519-0176) X
84. Reform and Policy Planning (519-0260) X
85. Rural Poor Survey (931-0236)
86. Progress Indicators for the Rural Poor X X
(931-0236)
87. Agricultural Sector Assessment

Guatemala

88. Small Farmer Development (520-0233) X X
89. Integrated Area Development Studies X X
(520-0249)
90. Farm Policy Analysis

Guyana

91. Agriculture Sector Planning (504-0077) X
92. Agriculture Sector Assessment
93. Research, Education and Extension Baseline Study

Haiti

94. Agricultural Development Support II (521-0092) X
95. Agricultural Sector Assessment

Honduras

96. Agriculture Sector Program (522-0100) X X
97. Agriculture Sector II (522-0150) X X
98. Agricultural Sector Assessment

Jamaica

99. National Planning (532-0039) X X X
100. Agricultural Planning (532-0061) X
101. Agricultural Sector
102. Research, Education and Extension Baseline Study

Nicaragua

103. Agricultural Planning and Statistical Services (524-0105) X
104. Rural Development Sector Loan (524-0118) X
105. Agricultural Sector Assessment

Panama

106. Agricultural Sector Assessment

Paraguay

107. Agricultural Planning and Statistics (526-0104) X X X
108. Agricultural Sector Assessment
109. Small Farmer Survey

Peru

110. Integrated Regional Development (527-0178) X
111. Agricultural Research, Extension and Education (527-0192) X
112. ONERN--Land Use Inventory Environmental Planning (527-0202) X
113. Iowa - Peru Program X X
114. Research, Education and Extension Baseline Study

Caribbean Regional

115. Caribbean Institutional Development (538-0016) X X X
116. Caribbean Agricultural Planning (538-0033) X

117. Project Development Assistance (538-0042)	X		
118. Agricultural Development Survey			
Regional Office for the Caribbean and Panama			
119. SIECA Institutional Assistance (596-0040)	X	X	X
120. Agricultural Research and Information Systems (596-0048)	X	X	
121. Agricultural Secretariat (596-0094)	X		
Regional			
122. Agricultural Sector Analysis Support (598-0554)	X		
Bureau for Science and Technology, Office of Agriculture, Economic Planning Division			
123. Latin American Planning Network (931-0236)	X	X	
124. A Framework for Appropriate Agricultural Planning in LDCs			

Table A-4. Agricultural Policy Analysis and Planning Projects in the Near East

Project	Project Paper	Mid-term, Interim, or Special Evaluation	Final Evaluation
Egypt			
125. Agricultural Development System (263-0041)	X	X	
126. Data Collection and Analysis (263-0142)	X		
Jordan			
127. Agricultural Economics and Planning (278-0137)	X		
Tunisia			
128. Agricultural Economic Research and Planning (664-0237)	X	X	X
Yemen			
129. Agricultural Development Support (279-0052)	X		

X

==========

Notes: In a number of instances, sector assessments or other activities (usually funded through the Program Development and Support mechanism) were included. These activities did not have Project Papers or evaluations, but all available documentation on these activities was obtained.

Numbers in parentheses are the A.I.D. project numbers.

REFERENCES

Abt Associates Inc. 1982. "Evaluation of Agricultural Sector Planning Activities in Latin America and the Caribbean." Report prepared for the Agricultural Policy Analysis and Planning (APAP) project, Office of Agriculture, Bureau for Science and Technology, Agency for International Development. Washington, D.C.: Abt Associates Inc.

Agricultural Policy Analysis and Planning Project. 1984. "A Comparative Analysis of Agricultural Policy and Planning Projects in Africa, Asia and the Near East." Interim Report. Washington, D.C.: APAP, Office of Agriculture, Bureau for Science and Technology, Agency for International Development. October.

.